FAA-00-7952-18

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Subject: ACTION: Safety Recommendation; FAR 121.703, 135.415

Date: October 5, 1995

From: NE FSDO - 01

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To: AAI-200 Frank DelGandio

This past September a DC-9-80 series aircraft operated by a national carrier was descending into Boston through 11,000 ft. when the left oil pressure light illuminated. This was accompanied by an oil quantity gauge reading of zero. The Quick Reference Handbook was followed with the flight crew electing to reduce the engine to idle thrust for the remainder of the flight . The left engine oil pressure was at 10 psi. for 20 min. The oil temp was at 75 degrees and N2 was at idle for 20 min. prior to landing. The landing was uneventful .

This incident may not be reported in the Mechanical Reliability Report System (MRR) because it does not meet the criteria as outlined in the Federal Regulations. The engine was not actually shutdown. This is a recurring problem with over 120 similar unreported incidents in a one year period by one DC-9-80 operator. Landing a two engine aircraft with one engine at idle certainly approximates an engine out landing.

Engine oil system malfunction is not the only incident that the carriers have avoided reporting due to loopholes in the regulatory reporting requirements. FAR 12.703 and 135.415 should be revamped to encompass phrases to close the loop holes in the regulations. Including a statement similar to " Utilizing the four digit ATA codes, identify any engine problem that prevents the powerplant from providing proper functional power." With this information the FAA will be able to develop a more meaningful data base for trend analysis.

Also we should consider the new technology and the industry trend of two engine airplanes regarding "Engine shutdown during flight of more then one engine" in FAR 121.703(a)(9). A majority of shutdowns today result in a single engine operation.

Arthur Ricca